



Idaho Systems of Care

“Working Together for Children in Our Communities”

Newsletter

<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov>

First Edition

May is Mental Health Month!

Did you know that one out of every five children have a mental health disorder? Approximately 18,452 children in Idaho have a serious emotional disturbance. May is mental health month celebrates the uniqueness of our children and the importance of every child's mental health.

Stigma often keeps families and children with mental health disorders from seeking help in their communities. May is a great opportunity to decrease stigma pertaining to children's mental health in your community. Media promotion folders are available. For more information, contact Tracie Bent at (208) 334-5722 or bent@idhw.state.id.us.



“How we solved it” Challenges and Solutions

Challenge: A teenager, who was staffed by a local council, wanted a ski pass for the season. His family did not have the financial resources for a pass. In addition, he had no one to ski with. His father, who lives with a disability, was unable to go skiing with him. The family and the council held discussions on the positive impact skiing would have on the teenager. After several meetings, the family and the council decided that skiing could be therapeutic. Psychosocial rehabilitation funding was not an option for the ski pass.

Solution: Multiple community partners participated in staffing the case. Partners included a parent representative, psychosocial rehabilitation workers, and school counselors. Each community partner

suggested various ways to provide assistance to the teenager and his family. After lengthy discussions, the council decided to use flexible funding to purchase a ski pass for the teenager. In addition, one of the council members agreed to ski with the teenager.

Success Story

Mom and Dad never left their son unattended. But it did not seem to help. Tom (not his real name) became progressively violent, and was kicked out of school. He had numerous encounters with the juvenile justice system.

Tom's parents came to the council, seeking one last chance for their son. They were tired of being afraid in their own home. The council listened to Tom's parents and developed a plan. Ten weeks later, Tom's behavior improved dramatically. His parents took a two week, out of state vacation. A family member watched Tom, with no problems. Thanks to the local council, Tom is currently enrolled in school, and has not had anymore encounters with juvenile justice.



Idaho Council For Children's Mental Health

The Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health adopted a uniform definition of serious emotional disturbance (SED) for youth accessing regional and local councils. The new definition allows regional and local councils to coordinate supports for families in their communities, regardless of diagnosis. This definition does not change agency guidelines for services. To view the definition its entirety, go to

<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov>

A stakeholder advisory workgroup was recently Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health. Members of the workgroup include representatives

from Health and Welfare, parent, Juvenile Justice, Federation of Families, and the Department of Education. The purpose of the workgroup is to increase communication and collaboration among community partners and make recommendations to the Council. The first meeting was held on March 15. Workgroup members discussed possible goals and objectives for the group.

Upcoming Events

Idaho Systems of Care Conference: May 3-4
For registration information, contact Sandy Cobb, in
Coeur d' Alene at (208) 676-1846.

Families Matter: Training opportunities for caregivers
and professionals who work with children with
serious emotional, behavioral or mental disorders.

Idaho Falls- April 30
Pocatello- May 1
Boise- June 1
Coeur d'Alene- June 4
Lewiston- June 5
Caldwell- June 8

For more information, contact the Federation of
Families in Boise at (208) 433-8845

What is a System of Care?

A system of care is a child-centered, family-driven network of services and supports for families affected by serious emotional disturbance. Agencies and private organizations work together to meet the needs of children and families within their communities.

Our local children's mental health councils are a vital part of our system of care. Councils are characterized by multi-agency collaboration. Council members empower families to make decisions, coordinate services and supports, and reduce the negative impact of mental health disorders on families.

Building on Each Other's Strengths" Update

The "Building on Each Other's Strengths" grant staff was invited to facilitate a series of meetings with councils in the seven Regions. The meetings include system of care training, establishment of goals and objectives and identification of strengths and challenges in each Region. Each meeting has opened with a testimonial by a parent who has found hope in their local council.

Regions 1 and 7 have hosted community planning meetings. Local councils in each region created vision statements for their councils. The meetings have been very productive and the staff would like to thank each council for their warm welcome.



The Bonner/Boundary Mental Health Council join hands to show their unity in helping families.

Meetings in Regions 6 and 3 were held the week of April 12. Kateri Ray, Chief of Social Work in Region 1, shared insights on staffing families and children. Local councils worked on several goals and objectives for the remainder of the year. Grant staff provided consultation for councils on how to fulfill goals.

Region 3 local councils used the Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health (ICCMH) charter and by-laws to begin construction of local council guidelines. Rick Matkin, Regional Chair, requested a draft of guidelines for the next regional chair meeting. Regional chairs will present a summary of the community planning meetings to the ICCMH in June.

Technical Assistance Corner

Coming soon! Local training opportunities and resources in children's mental health will be available on the Web. This information will be available to Council members, the general public, and agency staff. Currently, information regarding training opportunities is being sent to Regional Council Chairs for dissemination to the various Councils.

Nationwide training opportunities are available on the "Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health" Website, at <http://www.air.org/tapartnership/>

Please contact the technical assistance coordinator, Oscar Morgan, at morgano@idhw.state.id.us, for specific training needs or assistance.

What is Cultural Competence?

The need for culturally appropriate services is increasingly evident as our state becomes more culturally and linguistically diverse. Culturally competent services recognize value and respect the traditions of various cultural and ethnic groups within our communities. Cultural competence is defined as a set of behaviors and structures that allow a system to work effectively across cultures.¹

Culturally competent services reflect the culture and ethnicity of the people within their communities. In our local councils, networks can be formed with members of diverse cultural and ethnic groups to ensure cultural and linguistic competence. Community partners can learn about and respect the variety of cultural backgrounds within their communities.

For more information, visit the National Center for Cultural Competence at:

<http://gucdd.gerogetown.edu/nccc/index.html>

Update on Evaluation

Interview data from 16 of the 34 local councils on council development and activities was compiled. Further interviews with the remainder of the councils will be conducted. In addition, several parents of children with serious emotional disturbance are being trained as local evaluation specialists. The training includes confidentiality issues, interviewing techniques, and Systems of Care principles. Uniform confidentiality and release forms are projected to be in place across the state in May.

The evaluation team continues to work with councils after community planning meetings to assess further training needs and refine strategic plans.

Getting the Word Out: Community Outreach

Several councils have expressed the need for more community outreach. Here are some questions to ask before you begin:

1. **Who?** The sharper you focus on your target audience, the more effective you can be. Who do you want to reach? Doctors? Teachers?
2. **What? (The Message)** Find out what Appeals to your target audience, and say it. Your message should be based on research of your target audience.
3. **How? (Media)** How will you get the word out? A web page is probably not effective if your target audience does not have access to computers.
4. **Did it Work? (Evaluation)** Now that you have created materials based on your research, ask the target audience for their input. This is a great time to adjust outreach materials BEFORE spending large amounts of money on production.

Letter from the editor:

Welcome to the first edition of our systems of care newsletter. Entries for "Success stories" and "Challenges and Solutions" columns are needed. Please obtain permission from families to share their story. For confidentiality purposes, do not use the real names of family members when submitting a story.

Tell me what you think about our first edition. Send your comments and suggestions to:
storyc@idhw.state.id.us

Sincerely,
Chandra Story
Editor

¹ National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University